



Faculty Publications

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Title: The Library-IT Partnership: Challenges and Solutions

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Abstract:

The Klarchek Information Commons is collaboration between Loyola University Libraries and Information Technology Services. The Information Commons has been open almost two years and was in the planning stages for almost two years prior to its grand opening in January 2008. During that period the Library and ITS have learned how to work together to successfully operate this new service hub on campus. The article will look at the challenges faced by the two groups and how they resolved problems and faced the challenges inherent in running a large complex service-oriented organization.

Introduction

As libraries seek new ways to offer services, one of the avenues they pursue is reconfiguring their public service points into the information commons model. In doing so, many libraries have come to realize that they can't provide all the services themselves and look for those partners on their local campuses that complement the services traditionally offered by a research library. Writing centers, tutoring, and other academic programs are routinely discussed in articles about the move towards information commons service models. However, the most strategic partner in these ventures is the campus information systems department since many libraries don't have the infrastructure within their organization to support the technology that is an integral part of the information commons model. Depending on the campus, relations between these two groups can range from platonic to tense. In many instances, the inclusion of an information commons in a library is a matter of redefining services and existing spaces and adding computers and other types of technology to these spaces and services. In these cases, the relationship between the library and IT services may not change too much apart from a

budgets increase, new technology purchases, and/or adding additional staff to support the new service. In other instances, as is the case at Loyola University Chicago, a new building with an entirely different design and service approach, the right partner was needed to insure that the infrastructure was in place to support the needs of our students today, tomorrow, and in the future.

In 2005 when Loyola University Chicago made the decision to build an Information Commons adjacent to the existing library, it was decided that Information Technology Services (ITS) was to be a full partner in this new endeavor. The expectation from the beginning of this project was that ITS would be responsible for the technology services and resources that would be made available to the faculty, staff and students of Loyola University Chicago. The Library would be responsible for the research services, additional programming, and overseeing the operation of the building. Both organizations were involved from the beginning in the design of the building; working closely with architects and other groups to bring the Information Commons to life. Working together, Loyola University Libraries (LUL) and ITS intent is to offer support for effective, quality teaching, scholarship and learning. From the beginning, the Dean of University Libraries had expressed the mission and vision of the Information Commons in terms of the Three C's: Community, Collaboration and Connectivity. "The Loyola Chicago Information Commons was envisioned to be a place where students, faculty, and staff would easily and conveniently fulfill all their information needs, whether library or technology related. The intent was to provide a safe, comfortable environment for collaboration, learning, and the creation of knowledge with access to the latest technology and expert help from librarians and computer specialists." (Robert Seal, Dean of University Libraries, personal communication June 25, 2009)

Every decision that is made embodies the Three C's concept and how it fits into the Information Commons' mission while fulfilling the Loyola Promise, "Preparing People to Lead Extraordinary Lives," by providing a technology-rich learning environment that supports both collaborative and individual research.ⁱ While technology is instrumental to the IC, it is not just about providing computers for

students to use, but instead how can technology be used to further advance the research and learning of the student while they are at Loyola. As part of the library, the IC reflects a new methodology in the way it presents the support and services that libraries have provided in the past. The IC embraces technology and combines it with the research services that are part of what users have come to expect from a traditional library. Indeed, it is a latest evolution of the academic library, supporting the academic, research and the technology needs of today's user.

The most visible sign of the library within the IC is the presence of the Reference Department. It was the goal of the Dean to have research assistance available in the Information Commons and not just as a satellite to the main service available in the Library. Loyola students can come to the IC for a class or to work on a project with friends and stop by the service desk on the second floor to get help from a reference librarian regarding the best resources available for an assignment or class project. In addition, students can also work with a subject specialist in a consultation office located next to the main service desk. The addition of ITS support services, not only for the applications on the computers but by having a staffed Digital Media Lab (DML) and the department of ResNetⁱⁱ, means that the IC is able to accommodate the student one hundred percent from the start of their research through their final product. The philosophy of the Loyola IC is to fulfill the concept of an information commons by keeping the idea of the three C's in mind with the objectives of focusing on the needs of undergraduate students and providing a one-stop shopping experience for all types of information needs: library research, technology, and more. As the IC moves through its second year, the 3 C's remain behind every decision that is made regarding a new service, collaboration, or introduction of new technology. How does this new "thing" meet our goals of providing: connectivity, collaboration or community? Does it further advance our goal of being the place where learning can happen outside the classroom?

Much of the success of the IC depends on the relationship between the library and ITS personnel. Has the collaboration worked? What challenges have the two groups faced by agreeing to be partners in this

new venture? How has the relationship between the ITS and Library changed? Can this partnership be considered a success? We will look at the relationship between these two groups and explore the challenges presented and how they were addressed in this article.

Structure

Future planning and decisions regarding the configuration, services, and support of the IC are addressed through a formal Executive Steering Committee. The committee consists of members from both the University Libraries and the department of ITS (See IC organization chart). A subset of the Executive Steering Committee exists meeting regularly without the Dean of the Libraries and the VP/CIO of ITS and is chaired by the Director of the IC. The IC represents the expanding role of the library in the digital age. While it is a partnership with ITS, it is within the organizational structure of the Library. The IC Director reports to the Associate Dean for Library Services and Collections. The Director is active in various library committees and many IC staff are library employees. The Director is responsible for the overall operation of the building and works closely with her ITS counterpart in overseeing the daily operations. ITS is responsible for maintaining and supporting the technology services within the IC as well as the traditional library. In addition to providing frontline assistance with the computer equipment and its applications in the IC; ITS provides centralized campus support for all other traditional computer labs on campus from the IC. By centralizing the support from the IC, under the direction of the ITS Manager, the university is using the IC as a focal point of services and equipment as a measurement to be achieved with the traditional labs. The ITS Manager and the Digital Media Lab Supervisor report to the Director of Academic Computing and both have support staff within the IC working side-by-side with IC/Library staff. Together they also provide services and support outside of the IC and participate in ITS committees and projects. The IC Director and ITS Manager work as a team. Each one responsible for

overseeing specific aspects of the IC's agendas while cooperating to provide a comprehensive learning experience to the Loyola community.

Planning

While building plans and service conceptualization began in 2005 planning for the services and programming began in earnest in mid-2007 with the hiring of the Director of the Information Commons. The ITS manager was already in place, with ITS choosing the Manager of Student Services and the Digital Media Lab Supervisor almost a year earlier. This was necessary to facilitate and complete the technology part of the project budget with the decisions regarding equipment, software, and other IT resources. Once the management team was determined, the next process involved developing policies and procedures using a memorandum of understanding (MOU) as the focal point for discussions. The primary focus of the MOU was to clarify the relationship and responsibilities between the Library and ITS as it came to the Information Commons (see the outline of MOU). While not everything discussed was included in the final version of the document, it did help identify other areas that needed further discussion and documents that needed to be written. As progress was made through iterations of the MOU, discussions continued involving the Head of Reference and the Digital Media Lab Supervisor. As the primary service providers in the IC, it was important to establish policies and procedures that met the standards of all these groups. In addition, the Associate Dean of the Library was also an active participant in these discussions. One of the biggest concerns was that there would be a large gulf between the two groups (Library and ITS), not in the level of service provided, but regarding expectations of the student employees. Both the Library and ITS employ a large number of students to provide frontline services and that number would grow with the opening of the IC. Within the IC there are at least 5 different student employee groups providing different types of service and at different rates of pay. It was important to make sure that if there were a difference in policy, that the students understood why and that it made sense. Overall, the discussion between the departments went

smoothly and the expectations of student requirements were similar between the two organizations. While the library and ITS each had internal policies and procedures in place for its staff, these were used only as a starting point for discussion to create policies and procedures for the IC that would focus on providing the best possible service to our users. In most of the instances, the service levels and expectation for compliance regarding a particular policy, procedure, or support model was elevated to a higher standard than previously known by the library or ITS.

Once the MOU and an employee handbook were established other policies and procedures were discussed and drafts composed and presented to the Executive Steering Committee for final approval. While it was not possible to think of every necessary policy and procedure, it was useful to think through various scenarios, review existing Library/ITS documents, and modify them as needed to fit the service level requirements of the IC. During the first several months that the IC was open, the documents were reviewed and revised several times by both the IC director and ITS manager as a direct response to either customer or employee actions.

With the MOU and other documentation completed the next hurdle was designing, developing, and implementing training modules for all IC employees. It was decided from the beginning that all employees would be cross-trained in order to provide total support from any service point within the IC regardless of whether or not it was within their area of expertise. The idea was that users would be able to receive basic IT or library assistance from every employee in the IC and then, if necessary, refer the customer to an expert in the area if the request became too technical or complex. The training was divided into three areas: IC, Library and ITS. Each was designed to give a new employee an overview of the different areas and provide them a general understanding of the services provided by the respective areas of support: general IC, Library reference, and the three technology areas of ITS within the IC. The modules were tested on current library and ITS employees who expressed interest in working in or were being assigned to work in the IC. The modules were evaluated and modified based on the feedback

from the employees who facilitated the testing. Initially, the training was to take place over the Christmas break at least one full week prior to opening in order to give the new employees an opportunity to tour the IC, and become familiar with the building, and learn where things were located. However, as with best laid plans, the building was not quite ready and training could not be conducted in the IC until the weekend before opening. Therefore, several training sessions were held at other locations outside the IC. The student employees were able to attend one training session in the IC and receive a brief tour the commons, but were unable to thoroughly familiarize themselves with the building and how it operated.

The training modules were designed to allow each supervisor to review the different sections with new employees. At the request of the Head of Reference, all new IC student employees would meet with her or a member of her staff to learn how to do a basic catalog search and familiarize themselves with the different sections of the Library's website. The first several days that the IC was open, the IC/ITS supervisors and managers spent several hours working with the student employees to make sure that they knew their responsibilities and how to answer questions about policies, procedures and services.

Staffing

The first official library employee of the IC was the Director. As noted earlier, the ITS manager was already in place and had been working with the ITS project management team regarding not only the equipment and back-end infrastructure to support the IC, but staffing and service templates. In addition to the Director, two full-time supervisors and two part-time supervisors were included in the IC's organizational structure. Their job descriptions were written focusing on the relationship between ITS and the Library. The supervisors report directly to the Director and have responsibility for overseeing the building operations and working with various campus departments in the absence of the Director. They are also responsible for supervising the work of the IC student employees. The Daytime Supervisor

is directly responsible for their hiring, training and evaluation. The biggest challenge for all the supervisors in the IC is communication. There is very little work time overlap between the different groups of supervisors and managers, which makes it nearly impossible to have all managers and supervisors from the IC in a room together at the same time, let alone arranging a meeting of both management teams. As a result, email is used heavily to communicate between the different groups. At any given time, there is at least one supervisor in the building (except on Saturday nights) who acts as point person, responding to incidents and answering questions of the student employees. Other tools are also used within each respective area as well as across all groups: instant messaging, Wiki's, Blackboard Community, and Blogs. Instant messaging(IM) had been used extensively by ITS and was later brought into the IC and library. IM export groups were created so that each department within the IC as well as the library has access to staff on duty at all locations. It has become an essential tool to the daily operation of the IC by allowing students to contact any manager/supervisor at any time to ask a question or receive clarification on a policy or assistance with a user. In addition, it is used to insure that all our service points are staffed and to help locate an employee if necessary. This tool has had a major impact on how we communicate with each other, allowing us to share necessary information instantaneously.

As mentioned previously, initially one of the major concerns was the difference between the Library's and ITS' approach to customer service. This proved to be of little consequence because both organizations place a high premium on providing excellent service to users and working closely with employees to impart this philosophy. Another concern was the difference in how much student employees were paid by the IC and ITS. While there is a difference in pay scales, the responsibilities of each group is clearly differentiated and the ITS students are expected to command a higher level of technical skills as well as have responsibilities outside the IC. In addition, supervisors and managers work together to enforce the distinction of job responsibilities as defined in the two student employee

handbooks. It was decided early on that rules would be equally enforced between the two groups. Unless there was a valid reason, the expectation for each group was the same and they are held to the same code of conduct when working with the public. It was initially agreed upon and stated in the MOU that any person in a supervisory role, regardless of what area they report to, assist any IC staff worker through a support issue, or take immediate action in the event disciplinary response was necessary. However, communication (email preferred) to the responsible supervisor/manager would need to follow as soon as possible regarding the situation if any disciplinary action had occurred.

Implementation

The IC has been open since January 2008 and in that time the partnership between ITS and the Library continues to thrive. It has not been without its challenges, but overall the collaboration has been a success. The MOU is a living document, and is reviewed prior to each semester, and has been modified to more accurately reflect the relationship between the Library and ITS and their respective responsibilities. The changes to document have been minor, mostly reflecting actual practice vs. theory. The initial plan, as stated earlier, was to cross-train employees in order to provide assistance during peak times to all areas as well as provide a “one stop” location for support and services. However, this proved to be problematic and sometimes very confusing and frustrating for both the user and the employee. After trying this approach the first semester, the decision was made to let each group focus on developing their skills in their specific areas of expertise. This led to an immediate decline in problems and errors. The staff training sessions were adjusted to provide each group with an overview of the different departments and their areas of support. The focus of training became customer service oriented which includes proper referral procedures to place the customers in front of the right person effectively and without delay. While customers may be directed to someone else for assistance, they are provided with information that directs them to the right person, and whenever possible, be escorted

directly or, in the case of a telephone transfer be given an introduction before the transfer is completed so the recipient is completely aware of who the person is and why they are being routed to them.

Over the course of the first year, meetings were held regularly amongst the various groups to review services and support in their areas. Monthly meetings were and continue to be held with all managers and supervisors in the IC to discuss all aspects of service and support. During the first year the Steering Committee met monthly as well. Policies and procedures continued to be added and/or modified as we learned what needed to be done. Many of the changes and additions came as a direct result of observing what our customers were doing while in the IC. Working from prior experience of both the library and ITS, the policies and procedures initially created addressed most situations but with a new facility, new equipment, and services, staff in the IC were confronted with circumstances not planned for. Early on, decisions needed to be made very rapidly to address a situation or resolve a conflict. Often the person in charge, whether it was a supervisor, manager, or director, and sometimes a student employee, had to act in an area other than their own, e.g., the library supporting an ITS issue or the reverse. This is not to say there has been no conflict. However, as situations happened our goal from the beginning was to address them immediately and resolve the issue, working in partnership to a resolution that satisfied each area.

Over the past year, the IC has seen the inclusion of other groups providing service to the Loyola community, like the Blackboard drop-in clinic for faculty. The goal of the Information Commons is to provide academic and research support to the students, staff and faculty of Loyola University. To do this, the Director has been charged with seeking out other units on campus also providing academic support. Each new occupant works directly with the Director to establish relationship within the IC. While, there is not a new MOU created for each of these new services, there is a memo that is written outlining the responsibilities and expectations of each party involved.

Concerns

Communication, staffing, and customer service were the main areas we concentrated on in the MOU, training, and day-to-day support and these continue to be among the top three items addressed regularly. We have been able to add to our repertoire of items to improve communication within each area and across all departments supporting services in the IC. As stated earlier, email and face-to-face meetings were used extensively prior to opening. Instant messaging has proven to be the most efficient method of communication to address immediate support needs. The IC staff, independent of reporting area, is required to log into instant messaging while on duty. By utilizing this tool we have reduced the length of time it takes to answer questions and direct customers to the services they are looking for. From a management perspective it is also a great tool for remotely supporting staff.

During the MOU and other support documentation creation phase, network space was established so both the library and ITS personal were able to create folders and deposit items that both areas needed access to. This network space houses all versions of the MOU, the various policies and procedures, statistics, inventory spreadsheets, and any documentation associated with an event taking place in the IC. Utilizing this as a central repository for statistics and documents has also reduced the number of emails between the various departments, thus providing efficiency to communication between the departments.

An item that was not part of implementation but added after the first semester to improve communication was the “Incident Notification System”. The system was created to provide immediate notification to critical staff as well as create a record in the event of an objectionable situation. After an “event” anyone, typically the supervisor on duty, documents the situation in an email and sends it to an “alias” address. Everyone on the management team as well as key individuals within the University

Libraries and ITS departments receive a copy of the email as recipients on the alias list. The email is then used as a record of the event and made available to campus safety and security if necessary.

Staffing of the IC has been one area that we have made changes to every semester, summer, and winter break. The library, IC, and ITS areas deliberately scheduled a large number of staff the first semester.

What we thought was overstaffing actually turned out to be what we needed during most shifts and not enough during others. Our goal is, and continues to be, to have at least one staff member from either the ITS/IC/Library staffing the service points on Levels 1 and 2, our two busiest locations and where we receive the majority of our requests. The number of staff per shift at each service point was determined using several factors including the number of computers available in the IC, statistics from computer lab and library use, as well as budgetary allowances (see the IC snapshot).

Klarchek Information Commons SNAPSHOT

| | |
|---|---|
| 220 Computer Workstations | Library instruction classes |
| 50 Laptops / in-house circulation | Reference & Technology Assistance |
| Digital Media Lab | Workshops on library databases and research tools |
| Quiet Study Floor | Workshops on technology and new computer tools |
| Collaboration software | Library instruction classes |
| Meeting space | Writing Center |
| 6 classrooms | Guest access |
| 100% wireless | |
| Café | Silver LEEDS certification |
| average 38% increase in usage during fall semester 08 from spring semester 08 | |
| average 57% increase in usage during same month in 09 from 08 | |

Shortly after opening, the IC found itself in a “Field of Dreams” moment: “build it and they will come” and they did! Surprisingly though, there was not, and still has not been, a drop in patronage of any of the libraries or computer labs at either campus. Adding staff to cover effectively and support the IC

from either the library or ITS has not been a challenge. Existing student workers are eager to pick up additional hours and finding applicants to interview is almost a moot point since the beginning of each semester and summer session, each service area receives a large number of student applications requesting employment.

Effective staffing is critical to providing good customer service to the patrons of the IC, but listening to the student requests and responding to their needs and comments are also necessary. There are various methods for the students, faculty, and staff at Loyola as well as outside visitors to the IC to express their needs, requests, and opinions. Comment cards and deposit boxes are located throughout the facility as well as the adjacent café. The IC, library, and ITS each conduct on-line surveys as well as focus groups. One of the challenges faced by both the Library and ITS has been how to incorporate the IC into existing departmental surveys. It has been a challenge for both groups to incorporate appropriate wording and questions. In addition, the IC does its own surveys and we have had to work together over the past 18 months to avoid over surveying our users and also confusing them about the differences between the two groups.

Many of the changes proposed and implemented in the IC over the course of the last year and a half have come directly from observing what our students do while in the IC. For example, during the first few weeks of opening, IC staff observed the movement of furniture by students. Every morning certain chairs and tables would be placed according to the design plan and every evening they would be positioned differently, consistently from day to day. To the IC Director and ITS Manager this was an obvious easy fix: leave those chairs and tables right where the students kept moving them to and notify housekeeping of the new floor plan.

The feedback from the comment cards, surveys, and focus groups has often been more difficult to resolve. Those topics have not been anecdotal and none of it a surprise to the neither management staff nor the steering committee. The major areas of concern have been:

- 1) Space, students want more room to work on their projects
- 2) Not enough electrical outlets.
- 3) The noise level on the third floor

These three items have been discussed after each semester and changes made but they have not been resolved completely. On the matters of study space and outlets, the IC Director and ITS Manager evaluated the situation and developed a plan that was later approved and funded that involved moving furniture, purchasing additional tables and chairs, and shifting some technology from one floor to another in order to address space and power issues to the best of their ability without any major remodeling or construction.

The noise issue has been more problematic. The third floor of the IC is designated the “quiet” floor. All computer stations and work areas on this floor are single stations or small tables; the only collaborative spaces are group study rooms. The architectural design of the group study rooms and the third floor space does not accommodate the quiet floor concept precisely. The libraries at Loyola have quiet study areas that have always been self-regulating by the patrons and require no staff to monitor and maintain a non-disruptive atmosphere. While the third floor is very popular and usually very busy, the concept of self-regulation does not exist. It has been necessary during most of the open hours of the IC, starting from approximately noon until after midnight, to have staff assuming a monitor position at the service desk for the sole purpose of maintaining a conducive study atmosphere. Supporting the third floor to meet the needs and requests of the students has been the most challenging. IC staff from both the library and ITS provide service and support on the first and second floor. It is the third floor support that

has been the most difficult and cause for the most discussion between the library and ITS. The concern for both areas has been getting the student staff assigned to the third floor service desk, whether IC/library or ITS, to assume the responsibility of maintaining quiet. For student employees from either area having this responsibility is the most difficult for them to accept. It is agreed by everyone that there must be a monitor on the floor to maintain quiet. Currently, discussion with the management team and steering committee is underway to address staffing and methodology to maintain quiet on the third floor.

Retrospection

In hindsight most of the items we would like to see changed are mutually agreed upon by both the library and ITS and have to do with the utility and construction of the building itself. The collaborative process started long before the structure of the facility was complete which gave us ample time to discuss and publish the MOU and many of the policies and procedures for staff and customer expectations. Construction delays were the most difficult to work through and as a result equipment installation and setup was left to the very end. The department of ITS was challenged most with this working long days during the Christmas break installing, configuring, and securing work stations and other ITS supported equipment. For management this pushed back and prevented some of the training and testing that was planned. Beyond moving the staff training outside of the IC we were unable to test the laptop checkout process and the group study reservation system until the opening of the building. During the first two weeks of operations we were forced to make changes in applications and procedures during live production. It was imperative to constantly communicate with everyone daily updates; memos for library staff were sent to ITS staff and updates for ITS staff were sent to the library to make sure everyone was aware of any change.

At Loyola, construction of the IC was a capital expenditure involving a large project management team from several different departments within the university. Many of decisions were made at a level that did not include the IC Director and ITS Manager. It was during the final phase of construction during Christmas break that we identified areas of concern. Last minute decisions and accommodations had to be made in several areas including student employee storage space for their personal belongings while at work, supply storage, break room space, and supervisor office space. This is just an example of some of the items we identified. We recommend for those of you considering or planning an IC to bring the support staff into the project as early as possible to lessen problems.

While several areas were identified the final phase of construction, there have been several items that came to our attention after the building was completed and in use by our students. These include: the quiet floor, power requirements and collaborative space vs. individual space. These items and additional space allocations for service areas within the IC are what we are addressing now and will continue to work on.

Communication between both areas is vital and has been pivotal to our success. Even with the MOU, there have been questions of responsibility for situations that have arisen. We strive to apply the three C's to our working relationship in order to maintain and meet the expectations of our customers. The challenges and difficulties that we have experienced for the most part have not been because of differences between the library and ITS, rather they are the result of the demands of our community. Change at universities is not a new concept and the technology revolution and the expectations of students are making it more difficult for higher education to keep pace. From the moment we opened our doors in January of 2008, we provided our users a centrally located service and support, new applications and equipment that have not been used before at this university and still our users expect more! How do we keep up? Our answer: COMMUNICATION, COLLABORATION, CONNECTIVITY!

ⁱ Klarchek Information Commons mission statement.

ⁱⁱ ResNet provides the highest level of customer service to Loyola students: assisting them with their personal electronic devices allowing them to use information technology efficiently in their education.

- *Leslie M. Haas: personal reflection*

Over the past several months, both Alison and I have been asked to share with others our experiences in running the IC at Loyola University. Librarians are always interested in what challenges we have faced in opening this new building and how we have overcome them. Our response to these questions has been fairly consistent: COMMUNICATION! Communication is essential to the success of the Klarchek Information Commons. We talk or email each other (and the other supervisors and managers) several times a day. Even if a problem is not in the other person's area, we generally seek the other out to get a different perspective and advice on how to approach it. While communication is important, it cannot be stressed enough that we are working towards a common goal: meeting the academic needs of our users. There are days where we feel we are making progress and other days when we go back to the drawing board. I think that Alison and I would both agree, that our biggest challenge is to provide our students with services and support that they need to be successful during their time here at Loyola University Chicago. Finally, I would like to add that it helps that Alison and I both have our offices in the same building and interact with each other on a daily basis, it helps to have someone who understands what you are going through.

- *Alison Stillwell: personal reflection*

It's been very rewarding to be part of the Klarchek Information Commons. The relationship between the library and ITS has been pivotal to the success of the IC but also to my own personal sense of accomplishment. From the beginning we (Leslie and I) went in with the attitude that we were going to make this work. I'm not going to say everything has been a bed of roses, we do have our differences

and from time to time we've needed to work through those. Creating the MOU together and having it as something to refer to, if necessary, is a great support tool. While working through the MOU both the library and ITS made compromises to accommodate agreed upon policy or procedure. But I don't believe neither of us lowered our standards to accommodate the other. If anything, we raised the plane of expectations to achieve the level of service and support we demand of our staff as well as ourselves.

Any angst I have ever had regarding the library in this venture is mainly due to the differences between library and ITS internal policies and procedures with regards to employment and autonomy. There are differences and we must both respect that and move on. When I am having a bad day it's more typically related to management of such a large student staff or dealing with, what sometimes seem overwhelming patron demands. Sometimes I feel the more we give our students, the more they want! Students are the power users of technology and every year our incoming freshmen are more technologically literate than the year before. The way they multitask with instant messaging, texting, listening to music, watching a video - all while conducting research or doing homework is unbelievable for me. My challenge is not the day to day in the IC, but working with Leslie, ITS, and the library to come up with "the next best thing"!